

Meeting Summary
November 16, 2011 - DRAFT

Members Present: Melissa Brown, Robert Caggiano, Joseph Capuano, Jonathan Fink, Sean Gabaree, Michael Kallens, Larysa Kurylas, Sara Lappano, Tom Martin, James Mensah, Manuel Ochoa, Susan Petersen, Dianne Whitaker

Members Absent: Sanita Alrey-DeBose, Regina Dull, Chelsea Johnson, Zoe Lefkowitz, Chris Lindsay, Patrick Naehu, Erin Roberts

Guests: Aaron Kraut on behalf of The Gazette; Ben Gross on behalf of Wheaton Patch; Georgia Bennett on behalf of G&C Hair Salon; Louis Bonilla on behalf of Choice Electronics; Ana Lopez van Balen, Director, Mid-County Regional Services Center; Manny Hidalgo and Ash Kosiewicz, on behalf of Latino Economic Development Corporation; Mario Perla on behalf of Triangle Watch & Clock Repair; Salvador Rodriguez; Simeona de Leon on behalf of Los Cobanos R; Filippo Leo on behalf of Marchone's Italian Deli; Julia Harris on behalf of Proyecto Salud; Luis Barahona on behalf of El Pulgarcito del callao Restaurant; Moria Coripuna; Lisa McFadden on behalf of Lionsbridge; and, Ed Murtagh, on behalf of GreenWheaton

Call to Order: The meeting convened at 7:07 p.m. Jonathan Fink, presided over the meeting, welcomed all in attendance and congratulated several committee members on new births in their respective families. Mr. Fink advised that translation services were being provided for the benefit of members of the public in attendance who did not speak English.

Approval of October Meeting Summary – A motion to approve the October 19, 2011 meeting summary was made by Ms. Petersen and seconded by Mr. Gabaree. The motion passed unanimously.

Redevelopment Report – Mr. Klein reported the following:

- Wheaton Sector plan –the County Council reviewed its PHED committee comments – minor changes – Zoning near Core area – changed FAR by ½ for consistency Kensington View decreasing the zoning.
- BF Saul – the County is working with Jones, Lang LaSalle regarding a fiscal impact analysis of the B.F. Saul project, which will inform the County CIP budget process. The analysis will provide a better understanding of returns vs. costs, increased property values, increased revenues to local businesses, and assets. As an example, Mr. Klein cited Silver Spring's redevelopment, in which \$187 million in public funding generated a \$2 billion return. The Jones, Lang, LaSalle analysis is based upon a 30-year return period.
- County Council Town Hall Meeting – was held on Nov 2nd. Members of LEDC & Coalition for Fair redevelopment expressed their concerns. Council members expressed overall support for the Public private partnership with B.F. Saul but were concerned about its impact on small businesses. Council members also addressed questions concerning proposed curfew legislation.

- Ana Mendez University had a ribbon cutting on November 16th for its 3rd satellite campus in U.S. The University has invested \$2 million to date in its Wheaton location. It anticipates enrollment of 500 students, with about 200 starting in Jan 2012.
- Safeway/Patriot/Foulger Pratt had groundbreaking on November 9th for the new mixed-use Safeway- Residential project. Demolition and excavation are underway.

Mitigating redevelopment impacts on small businesses - Mr. Capuano, as Chair of the Economic Development Subcommittee, introduced the discussion which focused on the Subcommittee's consideration of the petition generated by the Coalition for Fair Redevelopment of Wheaton and the Coalition's request that WRAC support that petition. There are 2 principal issues advocated by the Coalition:

1. The Coalition wants the County and B.F Saul Company to meet with the Coalition to negotiate a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA).
2. A CBA between the County and B. F. Saul should be incorporated into the General Development Agreement between the County and B. F. Saul Company.

Before full discussion commenced, Louis Bonilla, owner of Choice Electronics addressed the Committee. He asked for WRACs support for Wheaton's small business owners and advised that the Coalition had secured over 300 signatures from local businesses and residents and was requesting the following:

- job opportunities for area residents
- Small businesses remains a critical part of Wheaton's identity
- Affordable housing for Wheaton Families
- RSC for community needs
- Multicultural Plaza for Wheaton community

Mr. McGinnity identified existing resources available through the County or its resource partners and indicated that the County is in the process of developing a program focused on strengthening businesses prior to redevelopment, as well as providing assistance to businesses impacted during the development phase of the proposed B.F. Saul project.

The committee then engaged in lengthy discussion regarding CBAs, both generally, and with respect to the B.F. Saul's project, in particular, as well as the 5 issues that Mr., Bonilla identified on behalf of the Coalition. The committee reached the conclusion that it supports the principles espoused in the Coalition petition but does not believe a CBA should be executed as part of a General Development Agreement.

MOTION: Mr. Capuano made a motion that WRAC should write the County Executive, recommending that B.F. Saul and the County meet with community stakeholders, including the Coalition, to discuss their concerns, and second, that WRAC should endorse the coalition priorities and recommend that the County and B.F. Saul consider them. Ms. Lappano seconded the Motion and it was approved by all members present.

Subcommittee Reports

- Economic Development Subcommittee – Mr. Capuano advised that in addition to discussing of the Coalition petition at its November meeting, the committee explored working more closely with the Wheaton Urban District on business revitalization issues, and identified the need for improved communication between the County and Wheaton stakeholders on redevelopment issues.
- Planning & Visioning – Mr. Martin advised that the last subcommittee meeting focused on presentations from Cornell University's Capstone Program that provided alternative scenarios for the B.F. Saul Project. Students in the Program proposed different blocking and building structures/styles. The committee discussed the merits of incorporating aspects of the Capstone scenarios into the project B. F. Saul proposes. At its next meeting the committee plans to review the project proposed by Alliance Residential Company to see if it is consistent with the vision and goals identified for Wheaton
- Project Review – Ms. Petersen advised that the committee had reviewed the 2nd draft of the Wheaton Sector Plan Design Guidelines and generated a draft letter recommending the following revisions: Stronger, more directive language; clarification of terms; and, identification of additional Gateway elements. At its December meeting, Wheaton Streetscape Standards will be reviewed.

MOTION: Ms. Lappano made a motion that WRAC approve the draft version of the letter, subject to minor grammatical edits, and that it be forwarded to the Chair of the Planning Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Caggiano and passed unanimously. Discussion of Wheaton Streetscape Standards at December meeting.

GreenWheaton Update – Mr. Murtagh reported the following:

- The group continued its outreach efforts with a booth at the recent World of Montgomery Festival;
- A paper shredding event the group promoted yielded 1 ton of shredded paper;
- the group participated Wheaton library outdoor clean up, and also Veteran's Park;
- GreenWheaton received an award of excellence from Montgomery County for their demonstration conservation landscape on the green space adjacent to Parking Lot 13;
- The recently approved Wheaton Sector plan will support the restoration of Sligo Creek;
- The group appeared at an event in support of the new County bag law, as plastic bags frequently wind up in stream beds; and,
- The December meeting will focus on energy efficient lighting.

Public Comments:

- Filippo Leo – a Triangle Lane business owner for over 20 years, expressed his concerns regarding B.F. Saul’s proposed project for Parking Lot 13. Mr. Leo supports development over the WMATA busbays, but believes Lot 13 development will have a fatal impact on many Triangle Lane businesses. WRAC members recognized that County and Saul must take these concerns into consideration, and also recognized that parking issues are reflective of Wheaton’s transition into a more urban setting. Mr. Klein advised that the Lot 13 portion of the development project won’t take place until the project over the busbays is complete - several years in the future.
- Ash Kosiewicz, Advocacy Director for LEDC – Thanked WRAC for considering the Coalition for Fair Redevelopment’s concerns Public Subsidy & Public Benefit

Motion to Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.